

Young carer letter to a best friend

This activity is generally more effective if classes are separated into smaller groups to allow for group discussion but if time is short the activity can be done with everyone in the class working together.

Each group should be given one of the case studies of a young person having to care for someone in their family and a piece of flip chart paper and a pen.

Pupils should read the case study, discuss what is happening and agree on what support the young carer would like to ask a best friend for. When drafting the letter pupils should think about any responsibilities, thoughts, worries, problems and feelings that their young carer may have.

The letters could include some of the following:

- I am really lucky to have you.
- I couldn't do this without you.
- I would like to say thank you.
- You are a really good friend.
- You are really helpful.
- You are very supportive.
- You are a good listener.
- You make me laugh.

It would be great if:

- I could talk to you sometimes.
- you could make sure I know about any work I might have missed at school.
- you could try to understand.
- you could come with me to speak to a teacher about everything.
- you could try to cheer me up.
- you could stick up for me at school if anyone gives me a hard time.
- you were able to help me at home sometimes.
- you could tell other people how difficult things are for me sometimes.
- you could help me.

The class should discuss each groups responses. Emphasis should be given to the responsibilities that young carers in the case studies actually have and how their own opportunities for friendship, leisure, extra curricular and even ordinary school work may be restricted by the tasks they do.